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DEPARTMENT OF VISITING NURSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE

IN CHARGE OF
EDNA L. FOLEY, R.N.

ILLINOIS. The nurses of the Dispensary Department of the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium of Chicago have recently adopted a very serviceable and becoming uniform. The out-door consists of a long, dark blue coat, made with straight lines, a broad belt in the back, a blue arm-band with the letters M.T.S. in white, and a small, dark blue sailor hat. The dress is of blue-grey gingham, made in one piece, uniform pattern, with high collars over which white linen turn-overs are worn. Stiff cuffs, slipped under the sleeves, complete the uniform. Rosalind Mackay (Post-Graduate Hospital, Chicago), formerly a head nurse on the staff, was appointed superintendent of nurses in August.

All of the larger staffs in public health work in Chicago, the School Nurses of the Health Department, the Visiting Nurses, the Infant Welfare Nurses and the Tuberculosis Nurses, representing a goodly and growing fellowship of over 250 workers, are now in uniform.

Recently the Dispensary Department of the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium has taken over all the home bed-side care of advanced pulmonary consumptives, work formerly done by the visiting-nurses. Now practically all of the free tuberculosis work of the city is done by the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium. Lest their interest in this problem should diminish with their responsibility, Dr. Theodore B. Sachs, president of the Municipal Tuberculosis Commission, gave a dinner on November 12 at the City Club for all the public health nurses, dispensary physicians and others interested in the care of the tuberculous poor. The subject for discussion was The Detection and Control of Tuberculosis and representatives from the tuberculosis, school, visiting and infant-welfare nursing staffs, told in turn how their organizations would coöperate in this big work. Then the discussion became general and social workers, physicians and nurses asked questions and contributed suggestions. Over 300 were present, and in order to conserve their interest and enthusiasm, Dr. Sachs has appointed a committee of four nurses, the superintendents of the tuberculosis, visiting, school and infant welfare groups, to formulate a plan of close coöperation, which will be printed for general distribution as soon as it is submitted and approved. In this way, every public health nurse

in the city will be on the alert to suspect and detect tuberculosis and will know just what to do with the patient. This is surely a practical method of coöperation and one that might be copied in other cities whether the public health nurses are under various organizations or in different groups under one central management. We have preached coöperation so long, it is a relief to take stock of our mutual helpfulness by beginning to practise it. There are few terms in the English language more overworked at present, than efficiency and coöperation. If nurses would use them less and observe them more, no great harm would be perceptible.

WISCONSIN. Do many nurses, anxious to improve their work or better their positions, realize that the University of Wisconsin offers excellent correspondence courses in English composition, sociology, public-speaking, political economy, domestic science and other subjects almost as valuable in our work? The superintendent and supervisors of the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago are going to take advantage immediately of three of these courses and will be glad to correspond with other nurses interested along these lines. Doubtless an extension course in public health subjects, sanitation, hygiene, sociology, psychology and household management, could be arranged for nurses' use, if the demand were great enough. Won't our sister nurses in Wisconsin start this request for us? Of course, no correspondence work can take the place of an inspiring teacher and class-room discussion but a great many subjects can be mastered in this way, if the student is really seeking knowledge. So few of us can stop for post-graduate courses that we ought to take advantage of every other opportunity offered us for more effective work, and few institutions offer more opportunities than do some of our fine big state universities.

KENTUCKY. The Kentucky Tuberculosis Commission was organized in the spring of 1913. Desiring to establish effective work in the small community characteristic of Kentucky, it decided to institute public health nursing in each county. Believing that it would be impossible to dissociate tuberculosis from other preventable diseases in the public mind, the commission secured the services of three experienced public health nurses, Emma Hunt, Frankfort; Chloe Jackson, Lexington; and Mary Williamson, Louisville. Each nurse was sent for approximately two months to a community, under the auspices of a Woman's Club or other organization. As a rule the commission asked that this coöperation should consist of local supervision and the payment of board, lodging, telephone and livery fees. Each nurse worked out her own salvation under the general direction of the commission.

Her first work in every community was to talk with the physicians

Department of Visiting Nursing and Social Welfare 315

who were asked to refer to her all cases of tuberculosis known to them. In many places few patients were discovered in this way for from one-half to two-thirds of the consumptives in each community were not under the care of any physician. The nurse then examined the death records of the two previous years and got names and addresses of families from local undertakers. She then found a way to visit these families for instruction and friendly advice. If she observed any suspicious symptoms, she immediately advised a physician's diagnosis and treatment. This showed the physicians that the nurse wished to work fairly and brought about their more effective and cordial coöperation. These beginnings led to the discovery of other cases of tuberculosis and sometimes patients suspicious of their own symptoms sought out the nurse themselves.

In addition, the nurse attended cases of typhoid fever, pneumonia and trachoma to demonstrate the possibilities of general visiting nurse service for humanitarian reasons and for educational and publicity value in the campaign. She also spoke before church audiences, Sunday schools, women's clubs, parent-teacher associations and before both rural and city schools. In at least two counties, every school was visited. As she talked to the children, she used this opportunity to watch for obvious physical defects. Numerous cases of adenoids, glands, defective teeth and anemia were discovered. Suspicious cases of hook-worm and trachoma were observed and parents were urged to obtain immediate and proper treatment for these conditions. Teachers were impressed with their responsibility in following up these cases; consequently, in three counties, medical examination of all school children is now planned, and this is in communities where medical inspection or the work done by the nurse would once have been considered an interference with parental prerogative.

In some communities this part of the commission's work has resulted in the employment of permanent visiting nurses. Support of the work has been obtained from city and county funds and through gifts from individuals, churches, lodges and other organizations, by the sale of Christmas seals and by the coöperation of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Ten counties have been organized, some of them very recently. Permanent nurses are at work in six communities. Mason County, the first one organized, has recently employed a second nurse and three other counties are looking for nurses. It is worthy of note that this visiting nursing has been successful in Kentucky communities, where little or no other social activity has been successfully worked out. The county rather than the town has been the field covered and al-

though it is impossible for a nurse to cover adequately a town of 7000 population, with at least as many more people scattered over the farming section of the county, the commission anticipates that other counties will follow the lead of Mason County and employ more than one nurse.

It is hoped that this organization will be the beginning of other social work, for already the nurses are being asked to supervise public relief cases and in the future the commission hopes that this effort to provide good nursing care for the sick in their own homes may be followed by medical inspection in every school, by appointment of truant and probation officers, and the establishment of small libraries and rest-rooms for country women shoppers, these last, perhaps, to be in connection with general free dispensaries.

WASHINGTON. During a typhoid epidemic in Centralia in November and December, 1913, a nurse was employed by the Health Department to administer typhoid vaccine and two nurses were employed to visit every reported case. The visiting nurses left verbal and printed instructions in the homes, reported all cases needing hospital care and detected several unreported cases. They made daily visits in homes requiring special observation and at first gave nursing care in the poorer homes but it was found to be better, from every point of view, to insist upon hospitalization for these latter cases. The state granted the use of the armory and this big building was turned into a temporary hospital where 70 of the worst cases were housed. This employment of emergency visiting nurses in time of epidemic is another proof of the value of the public health nurse to her community.

VACATION SKETCHES

(Continued from page 216)

July 23, Edinburgh. A beautiful city, much cleaner than Glasgow, though to the public health nurse, less interesting. Holyrood Castle and Abbey, St. Giles Cathedral, the Castle, John Knox's house and a drive through the steep narrow streets, long ago named succinctly "The Cowgate" and "The Cannongate," occupied our first day. We stopped at a hotel on Princes' Street, not far from the many-spired stone memorial to Sir Walter Scott from which he eternally views the passing crowds that throng "the most beautiful street in the world." For several miles, one side of Princes' Street is taken up with fine hotels, shops and public buildings, the other stretches out into a lovely park, sloping over the underground train-tunnels, up to the foot of the high hill on which is perched a fortress as picturesque as it is apparently

invincible. The grass is very green, so are the trees, the flower-beds are filled with bright blossoms, the whole city is so pleasantly attractive that a flying visit seems an aggravation. Memories of Queen Mary, Chalmers, Guthrie, Hume, Scott, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald flit through one's mind, while the Covenanters are ever with us. In the brilliantly garrisoned Castle (quite literally brilliant for the bright red kilts, brown plaid trousers, black fur helmets and plaided Glengarry caps of the different regiments made contrasts as startling as they were picturesque) we climbed endless weary stairs but were rewarded by a sight of the smallest Norman chapel in the British Isles, dedicated to St. Margaret, a peek at the royal jewels, and a glimpse of the room in which James I was born, a room in which few visiting-nurses would care to be called to assist—and by candle-light. Its small, single window dropped sheer over three hundred feet to such cruel looking rocks that it was hard to believe that his young mother willingly allowed him—at the tender age of three days—to be lowered in a basket to a group of loyalists who took the baby to a proper church for baptism and returned him, none the worse for his midnight adventure, to his mother. From the castle, one may go straight through the High Street to St. Giles Cathedral, where John Knox defied kings and rebuked queens and Jenny Geddes threw her stool at a preacher who had the temerity to attempt to introduce a ritualistic service. The stool, proof positive, is still on exhibition in the Antiquarian Museum. A fine bronze bas-relief of Robert Louis Stevenson by St. Gaudens kindles American enthusiasm but saddened the e'en of his old nurse, Alison Cunningham, whose child lived and died, a conqueror, not a victim, of disease.

A heart in the pavement just outside the Cathedral marks the site of the old Tolbooth and Jail famous as the "Heart of Midlothian" and reminds us that we are "walking over and past and through history." Down the street we stopped to inspect John Knox's house, a most interesting old mansion almost modern in appearance but interiorly its old stone fire-places and thick, thick stone walls and uncomfortable stone stair-cases convinced us of its antiquity. It is full of old furniture, portraits and books that delight the lesiurely traveler and the ardent Presbyterian alike.

It was nearly lunch time but tourist-like, we sped on, hoping to "do Holyrood" before our return. We were allowed to purchase admission tickets and were then kept waiting forty-five minutes in a cloistered walk of no special interest to hungry tourists, until the guides within had "shoved" a previous group through.

Since the militants have taken to knives and matches, women are

treated with frank suspicion in this land of men. The Castle is interesting, or would be if visitors were not herded through like restless sheep, but the ruins of the Abbey are so beautiful that one is glad that here, at any rate, restoration is impossible. To a nurse intent on city-planning that includes comfortable homes for the destitute poor as well as for the thrifty workmen, the enormous amounts spent here restoring castles and churches, seem inconceivably large and wicked. Edinburgh's high stone tenements are more picturesque and seem cleaner than Glasgow's but they are far from being good places for growing families. Its narrow streets and congested "closes" as its alleys and court-yards are called, need restoring sadly but we did not hear that ninety thousand pounds was to be devoted to their needs. We saw a cathedral in England on which this sum was being spent.

July 24th. One can't visit Europe without going into old churches and graveyards, and the grave of Adam Smith, the economist, and the Calton Hill burying-ground, where a bronze statue of Lincoln is erected to the memory of the Scotch-American soldiers who died in our Civil war, gave us food for thought next day. Beneath the epitaph is carved the following quotation from Lincoln, "To preserve the jewel of liberty in the framework of freedom." No American is more frequently quoted in England now than our former president and their appreciation is very sincere and keen.

Anyone interested in dispensaries should not fail to visit the Spittall Street Dispensary of the Royal Victoria Hospital for Consumption. This is an old church recently made over into a splendid out-patient building. A platform and moving picture screen stand at the pulpit end. Consultation rooms and dressing rooms have been walled off at each side of the church, while the gallery has been utilized for nurses' rooms, laboratories and a library. The body of the church is the main waiting-room and is furnished with bentwood chairs. The whole place is well lighted from the roof, and needless to say is very well ventilated. No tuberculosis society could afford to build such an ideal place, but I question if any unused stone church were ever put to better service. This is the dispensary of Dr. Robert Philip, the well-known tuberculosis specialist of Edinburgh, who has recently been knighted by the King. The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and some of its other hospitals are well worth visiting, but two days does not allow one to do everything.

(To be continued)